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CURRENT LITERATURE.

BOOK REVIEWS.

Agricultural bacteriology.

WITHIN THE LAST DECADE great activity has been shown in bacteriological research along agricultural lines. The medical phase of the subject has controlled the major part of investigation so long that it has escaped the attention of many that in its other applications bacteriology is destined to exercise an important influence. Professor Conn[1] has certainly performed an important service by bringing together in popular form the results of these numerous investigations that bear on the different phases of agriculture. A perusal of these pages will indicate that the subject of agricultural bacteriology is indeed a broad one.

Part I includes a summary statement as to the nature of bacteria, and especially as to the principles of fermentation, that process which is of such far reaching importance in agriculture. Part II embraces a discussion of soil problems, as to the origin of soil and transformation which carbon and nitrogen undergo as a result of bacterial activity. The action of bacteria in dairy processes is considered in Part III, a phase of the subject which often receives special treatment under the head of dairy bacteriology. The various technical fermentations that occur in the formation of vinegar, tobacco curing, silage, and sugar industry comprise Part IV; while the principles involved in the various methods of preserving food products are discussed in Part V. The relation of disease bacteria as noted in maladies of farm animals is included in Part VI.

In a number of these processes, the previously accepted view that bacteria are the sole cause of the fermentative changes has been modified materially by the study of enzyme action that must be ascribed to other than bacterial sources. Professor Conn has included a discussion of these researches, even though their non-bacterial nature has been demonstrated. This broadens the scope of the book and at the same time greatly increases its value. The book is written in a pleasing, vigorous style that is designed primarily for the general reader. At the end of each part a brief bibliography is appended that will be helpful to students who wish fuller data as to the literature.—H. L. RUSSELL.

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[1] CONN, H. W., Agricultural bacteriology. 8vo. pp. 412. Philadelphia: P. Blakiston's Son & Co. 1901.